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BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTICES

Conciliation and Arbitration in the Coal Industry of America. By ARTHUR E. SUFFERN. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1915. 8vo, pp. xxi+376. \$2.00 net.

Mr. Suffern has given us a good book on the adjustment of wages in the coal industry of America. He has told the story of the rise and development of conciliation and arbitration in seven chapters. The first deals with the efforts of mine workers to force the operators to agree to collective bargaining, and the many conflicts incident to the clash of the co-operating forces. At first, efforts at unionism were sporadic and local. In 1875, the National Miners' Association was "the advance guard of one of the largest industrial unions in the world." In 1890, this "largest industrial union" was organized by the submerging of the National Progressive Union and the Knights of Labor, and was known as the United Mine Workers of America, which precipitated the great strike of 1897. Chap. ii is given to the discussion of the question of unionism in West Virginia and the reasons why the United Mine Workers have failed to organize that field. "The geographical location of the state, the importance of its wealth in coal . . . longer hours and adverse working conditions . . . immigration, a conservative rural population . . . the concentration of wealth, and a determination on the part of the owners thoroughly to control and direct the exploitation of the natural resources," are given as reasons for the failure. The next two chapters describe the complex machinery evolved by attrition and conflict between the Operators' Association and the United Mine Workers for the purpose of effecting wage agreements. "The miners have had to organize to meet changing economic conditions and to offset the evils of individual bargaining." As the Miners' Union spread, "an ever-present necessity was at hand compelling the operators to bring about some degree of uniformity in wages and working conditions." Chap. v gives a bird's-eye view of the Coal Operators' Association and the United Mine Workers in conference, forging out an interstate agreement. Here leaders of capital and labor meet. Each side presents demands which it believes to be right. After much discussion and many conferences, the contending parties agree and all are happy; or disagree, separate, and possibly precipitate a strike. The next chapter shows how

the several state organizations which have participated in the interstate conference apply, in their respective territory, the agreement effected. Here are settled "the scale of prices to be paid in the various districts as it varies from the basing point according to the different coal veins and working conditions." We are also shown how the agreement in the working of the individual pit is carried out. The pit committee takes up the grievance of an individual; if it fails to bring about an adjustment, the matter is then taken to boards having greater authority, until an adjustment is effected. "The employers in the bituminous coal industry have learned that the labor problem is of sufficient importance to demand a department for the adjustment of labor conditions, and that it is just as valuable as the rates, financial, or construction departments." Mr. Suffern takes up in the seventh chapter the question of wage adjustment in the anthracite coal fields. Here the effort at unionism for two generations is depicted, culminating in the grand achievement of unionizing the men in the year 1900. He then describes the great conflict of 1902, when, after five months' suspension, President Roosevelt secured the appointment of the Anthracite Coal Commission. The decisions of this body are described, as well as the machinery installed at its advice for the adjustment of grievances, its effect on the contending parties, and the adjustments made in the industry since then. Two more chapters bring the book to a close; the one gives an outline of arbitration and conciliation in the coal industry of Great Britain, where, for more than a century, discussions and agreements, contentions and conflicts, have given mine workers richer experiences than have thus far come to their fellow-craftsmen in America; the other gives us the outlook for the future, in which Mr. Suffern discusses the interest of the public and its rights, the inadequacy of common-law remedies, the tying of the hands of the Interstate Commerce Commission by the courts, and some remedies which are needed before peace and good-will can be secured. He believes that a uniform system of accounting should be installed; that the number of pounds per ton by which the miner is paid ought to be uniform; that immigration should be restricted; that a minimum wage should be established; that the public should be informed as to the cost of mining justifying advanced prices; and that more power should be given the government to regulate railroad rates for transporting coal. The Canadian Disputes acts are described and commended as a wise measure for the enlightenment of the public in industrial disputes.

The book is well written, and the interest is sustained throughout, although the manner of treatment necessitates some repetition. The

author has carefully studied the literature of the subject. Federal and state laws relating to coal mining, governmental reports, court decisions, Interstate Commerce Commission cases dealing with coal interests, reports and decisions of special coal commissions, the action of conventions—both of operators and mine workers—have been carefully considered. So carefully are these considered, that the book smacks more of the study than of the mine; more of the academy than of the coal field. We should have a better book if the author were as familiar with mining as he is with the records of the struggles between the co-operating factors in the industry.

Mr. Suffern displays throughout the work deep sympathy with the mine workers. The efforts to organize the men, the suffering entailed by strikes and suspensions, the defeat of collective bargaining by capital, are well depicted; and naturally sympathy goes out to the men who endured persecution, imprisonment, and hunger for the cause they advocated. There is another side to the shield, which is not brought out so clearly, viz., the suffering and loss of individual capitalists. No business in America has suffered more from ruinous competition than coal mining, and it affected both operator and operative and was only redeemed from chaos by the pressure brought to bear upon capital by organized labor, which successfully conducted the strikes of 1897, 1900, and 1902. During the days of unregulated production, every coal field was strewn with the wrecks of individual mine-owners, who went under in industrial storms. These have a place in the story of the struggle for collective bargaining, although their suffering is not so spectacular as that of wage-earners in industrial conflicts.

The crux of all discussions in the industry is the wage question. Mr. Suffern discusses it, points out some of the difficulties in adjusting wages, due to the nature of the industry, but does not fully appreciate the significance of the suggestions he makes. A ton of coal from the face is very different from a ton of wheat from the elevator. Coal from the mines has dirt, slack, slate, bony coal, rock, sulphur, etc., in it. Marketable coal can be got only after the impurities are removed. How much is to be deducted for rock, slate, etc.? Every car cannot be examined in a mine producing 3,000 or 4,000 tons a day. The amount to be deducted is determined by examining a few cars and striking an average. If, by this method, 600 pounds per ton is a fair estimate, then both miner and operator agree that 3,000 pounds will be considered as a ton, for it yields only a ton of marketable coal. Now to demand 2,400 pounds as a ton would necessitate a readjustment of the wage basis, for otherwise it

would mean an advance of 20 per cent to the wage-earner, and few mines could stand that. The same question is involved in the demand for pay on run-of-mine coal. If a basis of 65 cents a ton for lump coal is agreed upon, it is unjust to demand the same rate for run of mine. The operators oppose paying for run-of-mine coal for the reason that miners will not, under such an agreement, be careful to produce lump coal. This question must be solved in such a way that the worker will produce marketable coal and still be justly paid for marketable commodity produced by his labor. It is one of the crucial questions and is far from being settled and may prove a rock of offense in arbitration and conciliation. Mr. Suffern has given us no suggestion how the matter can be equitably solved. An equitable adjustment can be worked out only at the tipples, where the interests of capital and labor conflict.

The trials and tribulations of bituminous labor organizers in the seventies and eighties are well depicted by the author. The efforts were crowned with success in the evolution of the United Mine Workers of America. When he comes to the anthracite fields, he asks why the organization did not take root here, and he says that the obstacles were "immigration and concentrated wealth." Mr. Suffern seems to forget that the territory in which arbitration and conciliation in the coal industry were first tried was the anthracite fields, and that the struggles and conflicts in the soft-coal field in the seventies and eighties were only repetitions of what had taken place in northeastern Pennsylvania in the sixties and early seventies, resulting, however, in the total defeat of labor. The leaders (Siney, Parks, etc.), who were defeated in the hard-coal fields, left for the soft-coal fields and began all over again. The movement organized by them is described by the author as "the advance guard of one of the largest industrial unions in the world." It took twenty years of hard work before the sons of these sires rejoiced over the victory of 1897. Then the sons came east in 1898 and won a still greater victory in 1902, on the scene of the sires' defeat. Mr. Suffern says: "The United Mine Workers of the bituminous fields had felt the effects of the anthracite coming into their markets during their early struggles, and this, without doubt, was one impelling force which drove them to organize the anthracite miners." Anthracite has never competed with bituminous in times of industrial conflict and never can, because of the nature of the coals. A glance at the tonnage produced in the anthracite territory in the years of conflicts in the bituminous regions would have convinced the author of this. Bituminous and anthracite can replace each other only by a gradual process necessitating change of appliances.

Mr. Suffern makes too frequent use of competition and heterogeneity of the labor supply to explain labor difficulties. In referring to the Miners' National Association of 1875, he says: "These men were made up of the most heterogeneous population," although the men spoke the same language and had the same customs. In discussing the anthracite fields he says "unionism during the seventies and eighties was not more successful" because of "the effects of immigration," although in reality the foreigners were not a factor in the territory until later. He also says that "heterogeneity in the anthracite regions during the eighties and nineties was one of the chief factors that destroyed the beginnings of organization for conciliation," when the real cause was the conflict between the Knights of Labor and the Miners' and Laborers' Amalgamated Association in their efforts to organize the men. The southwest coal fields, the Cumberland territory, the mines of Kentucky and Tennessee, the Colorado coal mines, have never seriously competed for the markets of the Central West, where both operator and operative have had to fight ruinous competition; and the entrance of the Miners' Union into these fields must have some other motive than competition. The miners and operators of Nova Scotia or British Columbia, of Arkansas or Maryland, of Colorado or Alabama, will never be interested in interstate conventions, for they are not competitors and have no interests in common. The adjustment of wages in these fields, as well as in the anthracite region, must be effected in the respective territories. Some of the leaders of the United Mine Workers have always questioned the advisability of projecting the organization into these fields, because they were not competitors, believing that they had all they could attend to and do it well in the competing territory.

Mr. Suffern would close the door against immigrants going into the coal-mining fields, for he believes that heterogeneity in the labor force is a hindrance to collective bargaining, and also accounts for the glut in the labor market. And yet the greatest union ever perfected in the coal industry was effected in the years of greatest heterogeneity in the labor force, and the greatest victories ever won in the coal industry have been won in fields where the Slavs, Magyars, and Lithuanians form the largest percentage of the working force. If the author knew the men of these races he would not have found in them a hindrance, but rather a help, to organized labor. They make better union men than ever the races from the British Isles did, and it is by their help that the coal industry has been raised to its present basis in the competitive territory. The glut in the labor market of the coal fields has ever been a fact.

Before the Slavs entered, intermittent labor was more serious than it is today. Surplus labor is almost a necessity. Production depends upon so many conditions in and out of the industry that it is impossible to forecast the market. A variation of 40,000,000 tons in one year is not unusual; but that tonnage would give a year's work to 60,000 men. The coal industry has doubled its output each decade for the last half-century, and the incoming of the foreigners has made this possible. Is this development to go on, or shall we check it by closing the door against the Slav and Magyar, Italian and Lithuanian, immigrants? Miners and operators have succeeded in regulating competition; will not this regulate the labor market just as it regulates capital in the coal industry?

Mr. Suffern shows how concentrated wealth has come into control of the coal fields, but he has not with equal clearness shown the part played by organized labor in this movement. Individual operators, during the years of competition, went under by the score in conflicts with labor. When the fight was on, the railroads bought out the interests of the fallen. The same process was observed in the anthracite fields, in southern Illinois, and in West Virginia. Industrial warfare is costly and the individual operator cannot stand it. Only strong aggregations of wealth, which could develop pits that cost from \$500,000 to \$1,000,000, could stand the strain and pass on the burden to the public. This large investment in openings and appliances has been the life of the industry. It has made possible the 2,000,000 tons a day to keep the wheels of industry going. It had its dangers. The story of concentrated wealth as affecting the rights of labor in West Virginia and Colorado equals anything oriental despotism has to offer. The way in which the anthracite operators have imposed monopolistic prices on consumers well illustrates how patient the public can be. But its benefits are many. In collective bargaining, it is much easier for the union to deal with the Big Seven than with seventy individual operators; labor failed to regulate competition, capital does it; decent wages are paid today, and the public is sure of its coal supply.

The leaders of the Mine Workers are ambitious to organize all the employees in the coal industry; but when the author says that "the fate of the joint agreement is dependent upon their success in thoroughly organizing the coal industry," he overstates the case. Some of the strong corporations have steadily refused to allow the organization to enter their field. These are considered by the author as "a hindrance to themselves and to society," for they have not seen how "collective bargaining softens class antagonism and encourages friendly relations between

employers and workers." Many of these companies give good homes to their employees, make working conditions better than the state law requires, pay their men a little better than union rates, and yet they are the sore spots in the eyes of labor leaders, because "they will not surrender some of their prerogatives" and democratize their industry.

After reviewing the struggle for arbitration and conciliation in the coal industry, Mr. Suffern has not absolute faith in it. He turns his face to the government as the protector of the public against monopolistic prices and possible conflict. He says: "One fact stands out plainly—the weakness and inadequacy of our public policy in dealing with the growing control of such an important commodity as coal." "Where railroads own the coal mines, it will be necessary to make a thorough investigation of the costs of mining," and for this purpose he advocates "a uniform system of accounting, to arrive at a fair approximation of the cost of mining a ton of coal," which would help the Interstate Commerce Commission to "adjust railroad rates on coal in relation purely to the cost of transportation," and be "a powerful factor in preventing arbitrary action on the part of either capital or labor when they meet for collective bargaining." He recommends the Canadian Industrial Disputes acts as a means to secure facts which the public should know and to prevent suspension of work during investigation. Mr. Suffern does not give us a hint, even, that the bitterest foes of any such regulation on the part of the government are the very men he honors for the development of arbitration and conciliation. And in this the operators are one with the mine workers. Mr. Suffern would make the eight-hour day general as a means "to bring up the level of working conditions and competition between the organized and the unorganized fields," and a minimum wage, "equal to the wage paid in the organized districts." In the previous chapter he has told us how these measures, introduced by the government, have been resented by the mine workers of Great Britain, who believe that they should be left to the several districts for adjustment. Mr. Suffern also sees difficulties, and says: "The minimum wage may be considered a measure of last resort, though it may not be more difficult to inaugurate than the other measures advocated after constitutional and legislative difficulties have been surmounted." A more intimate knowledge of the industry would add still further to the difficulties in the way of these remedies.

There are minor items which deserve attention. On p. 6 the author says: "Production was estimated at 6,500,000 tons in 1861, and there were about 30,000 miners in the industry." This was the production

of the bituminous coal only, while the 30,000 employees were those employed in the bituminous and anthracite fields. If the total number of employees is given, the tonnage for the year ought also to be given, which was 16,500,000. In referring to machine mining, he says that it "does away with pick miners, and makes them machine tenders or mere 'loaders.'" A skilled miner never becomes a "loader." He finds company work, becomes a shot-firer, or enters some other line of employment. Unskilled foreign laborers are the coal-loaders. West Virginia is said "to rise from the lowest rank as a producer of coal, until it stands next to Pennsylvania," which is not exactly true. The state has been fifth in the order of production since 1864; came to fourth place in the eighties, to third in the nineties; competed with Illinois in the next decade for second place, and has only gained that ascendancy during the last four years. In describing the United Mine Workers, he says "a local union is allowed jurisdiction over only one mine." A local may have jurisdiction over many mines, and sometimes it is found advantageous to organize locals along national lines, regardless of the mine in which the members work. On p. 118 we find that "board members, tellers, auditors, and delegates to the American Federation of Labor receive \$4.00 and expenses when employed," meaning doubtless \$4.00 a day and expenses. In comparing the wages of anthracite coal workers and those of the bituminous field, he finds that the general level of wages in the latter was higher than in the former, which he explains as the result of collective bargaining, forgetting that in the anthracite field there are 20,000 breaker boys employed, which is a classification unknown in the bituminous field. In the computation on p. 176 of wages in West Virginia, the basis of comparison is the number of days worked and hours per day, to get the comparison of wages per hour. All know that for men paid by the ton, hours are a very uncertain basis of comparison. It would be better to make the comparison on the basis of tons mined. On p. 232 he says that the competition between the races for a chance to work did not begin in the anthracite coal fields until 1880, when the southern Europeans began to come in. The fact is that competition between races in the anthracite coal field was as keen then as later. We are told again and again that capital introduced the immigrant into the anthracite coal field; when the fact is that the law passed at the instigation of mine workers, that no one could enter the mines as a miner unless he had spent two years as a laborer, made it impossible for operators to get men to enter the mines save unskilled foreign-born laborers. On p. 39 we are told that the news was printed in the *United Mine Workers' Journal* in several languages,

and that "the full import of such a propaganda became apparent when the anthracite strikes of 1900 and 1902 brought about the welding of many nationalities." The organ was unknown at this time in the hard-coal fields, and no news was printed in it in foreign tongues. On p. 44 the strike of 1897 is said to include "practically the entire field, except a few districts in West Virginia"; but on p. 67 we have "out of 15,049 workers [in West Virginia] in 1897, only 5,314 struck." When, on p. 171, the author says: "The joint agreement has brought, by unity of action, the abolition of company stores and company tenements, the inauguration of the eight-hour day, regulation of screens, equalization of wages of different classes, and the improvement of working conditions and safety appliances," he overestimates the benefits wrought, for company houses and company stores still exist, as well as disparity of wages in fields where the joint agreement obtains.

The book is well worth reading and ought to find a place on the shelf of every man interested in arbitration and conciliation, while editors will find it of great value in giving dates and facts regarding joint agreements in the coal industry of America.

PETER ROBERTS

NEW YORK CITY

Public Utilities; Their Cost New and Depreciation. By HAMMOND V. HAYES. New York: D. Van Nostrand Co., 1913. 8vo, pp. xii+262. \$2.00 net.

Public Utilities; Their Fair Present Value and Return. By HAMMOND V. HAYES. New York: D. Van Nostrand Co., 1915. 8vo, pp. viii+207. \$2.00 net.

Mr. Hayes has based his explanations and comment, and what may be termed his theory of valuation, upon the principles enunciated in the decisions of the courts and public service commissions. Authoritative decisions have not covered all phases of the question and they have frequently thrown only side lights on the specific questions that are beginning to stand out clearly and demand unequivocal answers. It is thus helpful to have the conscientious examination that we have in the first book, mentioned above, of the factors that enter into valuation, and to have the attempt made to outline a theory that will pass through all points marked by important decisions.

It is inevitable, however, that such a method of treating the problem should leave the reader somewhat confused. The questions involved are complex, and courts and commissions have naturally committed them-